

A Letter vvritten

the L. *Discunt* ANAN, de
nature and reason of the late
extended to the Lay-Recul
ENGLAND.




Anno Domini, M. DC. XXII.

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I
Right Honourable,

 I Owe more service to that true lone
and former acquaintance, which
your *Lo.* hath beene pleased to af-
foord me, now these full *ten yeeres*,
then to be sparing or reserved in sa-
tisfying your *Lo.* about any doubt
whatsoever, the resolution whereof, shall lie in
my power. Concerning that *offence*, taken by
many people, both this side the *Borders*, and in
Scotland, from that *clemency*, which his *Maiessty*
was pleased to extend, to the imprisoned *Lay-
Recusants* of this *Kingdome*; and my *Letter* writ-
ten vnto the *Iustices*, for the reigling of the same
(which your *Lo.* did intimate vnto me yester-
day at *M. Henry Gibbe* his house, out of some
newes receiued from a *Peere* of *Scotland*) this is
the plainest *returne* I can make vnto your *Lo.*
In the *generall*, as the *Sunne* in the *Firmament*
appeares vnto *Us* no bigger then a *platter*, and
the *starres*, but as so many *nailes* in the pom-
mell of a *Saddle*, because of that *esloinement*
and disproportion betweene our eyes and the
obie&: so is there such an vnmeasurable *distance*
betwixt the deepe resolution of a *Prince*, and
the shallow apprehension of *common* and *ordi-
nary* People; that as they will bee euer *iudging*
and censuring, so must they bee obnoxious to
error and mistaking. *Particularly*, for as much
as, concernes my selfe, I must leaue my *former*

life, my profession, my continuall Preaching, my writing (which is extant in the hands of many) my private indeuours about some great persons, and the whole bent of my actions (which in the place I liue in, cannot bee concealed) to testifie vnto the world, what fauour I am likely to importune for the Papists in point of Religion. For the King my Master, I will tell you a story out of Velleius Paterculus. A Surueyor bragging to M. Linius Drusus, that hee would so contriue his house, vt libera a conspectu, immunis ab omnibus arbitris esset, that it should stand remooued out of sight, and bee past all danger of peeping or case-dropping, was answered againe by Drusus, Tu vero, si quid in te artis est, ita compone domum meam, vt quicquid agam ab omnibus conspici possit. Nay my good friend, if you haue any deuices in your heade, contriue my house after such a maner, that all the world may see what I doe therein. So if I should endeuour to flourish vp, some artificiall Vault, to hide and conceale the intentions of his Maiessty, I know I should receiue the same thanks that the Surueyours did from M. Drusus. I was not called to Counsell, by his Royall Maiessty, when the resolution of this clemency to the Lay-Recusants was first concluded: but if I had beene asked my opinion, I should haue aduised it, without the least hesitation. His Maiessty was so Popishly addicted at this time, that (to the incredible exhaustments of his

his *Treasury*) hee was a most zealous *interceder* for some ease and refreshment to all the *Protestants* in *Europe*, (his owne Dominions and *Denmarke* only excepted.) Those of *Swethland* (hauiug lately prouoked the *Pole*) had no other hope of *peace*, those of *France*, of the exercise of their *Religion*, those of the *Palatinate* & adioyning *Countries*, of the least *conuiniency* to say their *prayers*, then by the earnest mediation of our *gracious Master*. And aduised by the late *Assemblee* of *Parliament* to insist a while longer in this milkie way of *Intercession* & *treaty*, what a preposterous *argument* would this haue beene to desire these mighty *Princes* (armed and victorious) to grant some *liberty* and *clemency* to the *Protestants*, because *Himselfe* did now *imprison*, and execute the rigour of his *lawes* against the *Roman-Catholiks*. I must deale plainly with your *Lo.* our viperous countrey men the English *Iesuits* in *France*, to frustrate these pious indeauors of his *Maiestie*, had many moneths before this *fauour* granted, retorted that *argument* vpon *vs*, by writing a most malicious *booke* (which I haue seene, and read ouer) to the *French king*: inciting him and the *three Estates*, to put all those *Statutes* in execution against the *Protestants* in those parts, which are heere enacted and (as they falsly informed) seuerelie executed vpon the *Papists*. I would therefore see the most subtrill *State-*

monger in the world chalke out a way for
 his *Maiestie* to mediate for *grace* and *fauour*,
 for the *Protestants*, by executing (at this time)
 the *seueritie* of his *lawes* vpon the *Papists*. And
 that this *fauour* should mount to a *Toleration*, is
 a most dull (and yet a most diuellish) miscon-
 struction. A *Toleration* lookes forward to the
time to come, this *fauour* backward to the *offen-*
ces past. If any *Papist* now set at *libertie*, shall
 offend the *lawes* againe, the *Iustices* may (nay
 must) recommit him, and leaue *fauour* and
mercy to the *King*, to whom only they proper-
 ly belong. Nay let those two *Writs* directed to
 the *Judges* bee as diligently perused by these
 rash *Censurers*, as they were by those *grave*
 and *learned men*, to whom his *Maiestie* referred
 the *penning* of the *same*: and they shall finde,
 that these *Papists* are not otherwise out of pri-
 son, then with their *shackles* about their *heelles*,
 sufficient *suerties* & good *recognizances* to pre-
 sent themselues againe at the next *Affises*. As
 therefore that *Lacedemonian* apposed the *oracle*
 of *Apollo* by asking his opinion of the *bird*
 which he grasp't in his hand, *whether he was a-*
liue or dead: So it is a matter yet controuerted
 and vndecided, whether these *Papists* (clos'd
 vp & grasped in the *hands* of the *law*) be still in
prison, or at *libertie*. Their owne *demesnour*, and
 the *successe* of his *Maiesties negotiations*, are the
oracles

oracles that must decide the same. If the *Laie-Papists* doe waxe *insolent* with this *mercy*, insulting vpon the *Protestants*, and translating this *fauour* from the *person* to the *cause*, I am verilie of opinion that his *Maiestie* will remaund them to their former state and condition, and renue his *writ* no more. But if they shall vse these *graces* modestly by admitting *conference* with learned *Preachers* demesning of themselves, *neighbourly* and peaceably praying for his *Maiestie*, and the prosperous *successe* of his pious endeouours, and relieuing him bountifullie (which they are as well able to do as any other of his *subiects*) if he shall bee forced and constrained to take his *sword* in hand: then it cannot bee denied, but our *Master* is a *Prince*, that hath (as one sayd) *plus humanitatis pene quam hominis*, and will at that time leaue to bee *mercifull*; when hee leaues to bee *himselfe*. In the meane while this *argument* fetcht from the *Diuels Topickes*, which concludes a *concreto ad abstractum*, from a fauor done to the *English Papists*, that the King fauoureth the *Popish Religion*, is such a composition of *Folly*, and *mallice*, as is little deserued by that *gracious Prince*, who by *word*, *writing*, *exercise of Religion*, *Actes of Parliament*, late *directions for Catechising and Preaching*, and all *Professions* and indeuours in the world hath demonstrated himselfe so resolu'd a *Protestant*.

God by his *holy spirit* open the eyes of the people, that these *very representations* of vngrounden phantasies, set aside, they may cleerly discern and see, how by the goodnesse of God, and the wisdom of their King, this *Island* (of all the Countries in *Europe*) is the sole nest of peace and true Religion. And the inhabitants thereof, *unhappy* onely in this one thing, that they neuer look vp to *Heaven* to giue God thanks for so great a *happinesse*.

Lastly, for mine owne Letter to the Iudges (which did only declare, not operate the fauour) it was either mispennd or much misconstrued. It recited fowre kindes of *Recusancies* onely capable of his *Maiesties* clemency, not so much to include these, as to exclude many other crimes, bearing amongst the *Papists* the name of *Recusancies*, as using the function of a *Romish Priest*, seducing the Kings liedge people from the Religion established, scandalizing & aspersing our King, Church, State, our present gouernment. All which offences (being outward practises, and no secret motions of the conscience) are adiudged by the Lawes of England, to be merely *Ciuill* and *Politicall*, and excluded by my Letter from the benefit of those Writts, which the bearer was imployed to deliver vnto my Lordes the Iudges. And thus I haue giuen your Lo. a plaine accompt of the cariage of this businesse, and that the more suddenly

denly, that your Lo. might perceiue it is no *Aurea Fabula*, or prepared Fable, but a bare *narration* which I haue sent vnto your Lo. I beseech your Lo. to let his *Maiessty* know, that the Letters to the *Iustices of the Peace*, concerning those 4. heads, recommended by his *Maiessty*, shall be sent away as fast as they can bee exscribed. I will trouble your Lo. no more at this time, but shall rest euer

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Your Lo. seruant and true friend.

From Westm. Coll. this
 17. of Sept. 1622.